

## AMAZING DECLINE OF BASEBALL LAST YEAR

National Game Never Experienced Such Slump as Last Season When Minors Quit.

## MIKE SEXTON IS OPTIMISTIC

National Association Head Believes Game Will Come Back Bigger Than Ever in 1920.

Baseball in various parts of the country has suffered from lack of patronage, on many occasions, to an amazing degree, but the national game never experienced the decline it met in 1918, according to the records of the National Association of Baseball Clubs.

Nearly every league in the country was hit hard when the draft started to call the youngsters into service, and even before General Crowder's famous "work or fight" order, quite a number of the small leagues were preparing to "close up shop."

The records of the national association are astounding, but interesting. Here's the lineup: The Central league, after 15 years of unbroken record, gave up the ghost. The New York State league after 22 years of life also quit. The L. I. league with 17 years to its credit ceased and the Southern Atlantic league barely celebrated its fifteenth birthday.

In short, practically all of the minor circuits suspended during 1918, and most of them took action before the Crowder order. People had their mind on the war and not on baseball and baseball suffered.

The most deplorable fact in connection with the sad decline in minor league circles is that but a few of the small leagues tried to make a come-back this season. With so many athletes in the army and unable to state or even know when they would reach home shores, the Class B and C leagues were hard pressed to find the necessary talent with which to make a flag race.

President Mike Sexton of the national association, however, extracts some comfort from the war condition that drove the minors into temporary retirement, for he declares baseball will have entirely new meaning to Americans when the pre-war basis is reached in 1920, and all of the doughboys have returned to their homes and natural haunts.

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## RELEASE NO CAUSE FOR JOSH TO FRET

Former Hero of World's Series Drawn Pink Slip Then Wishes Old Boss Luck.

Josh Devore has been released again! For the twentieth time little Josh has received the pink slip, but he is not worried because he will probably hook on to another job within a few weeks, possibly within a few days.

Devore should have the medal for the consecutive release record. Since he was cut off the pennant-winning Giants by John McGraw, Josh has been shifted around from pillar to post in the major and minor leagues, and just when he gets in to look for the announcement of his permanent retirement, he lands another job.

Devore was let out by the Indianapolis club of the American association this time. He was given a job this season by Manager Jack Hendricks when it was feared the Hoosiers would not be able to find enough clever youngsters to keep even in the race. Devore performed nicely, although not as brilliantly as he has performed some few seasons ago. Father time has had a heavy hand on the diminutive one, but his batting optic is still good enough to hold him in several of the faster minor circuits.

Unconditional releases are usually accompanied by address for most players. The pastures declare that the unconditional release means a decision for Father Time, but Devore only smiled when he got his last week, and he departed from the Indianapolis club with a big broad smile and the best wishes for Hendricks and his crew. Hendricks says Devore's smile means the release proposition a tough job for the manager. It's hard to beat the man who smiles at adversity.

Devore is an athlete in other directions too. He admits he is slowing up. He admits that every game he plays it is just that much harder for him to come back for the next game. "The old muscles and bones don't revive like they used to," and Josh, "but we're going to keep them limbered up now for the rest of the season if we have to play in a class B league. It is rumored Devore may join the Toledo club in a few days."

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## GOVERNMENT LOSING AS INSURANCE FIRM

Has Received \$2,200,000 and Paid Out \$9,000,000 on Policies.

The government has received to date about \$2,200,000 of premium money for war risk insurance, and the death claims to date are more than \$9,000,000, according to a letter from Leon O. Fisher, assistant director of the bureau of war risk insurance to the southwestern division.

Outside of the calls concerning the obtaining of their liberty bonds bought while in service, the war risk insurance of the Red Cross say that they have more calls of inquiry about insurance than any other one thing.

More than 4,000,000 men insured for a total of over \$25,000,000. Mr. Fisher's letter declares, starting with a very small force of workers the bureau now employs over 47,000 people.

"The act of congress authorizing the insuring of every United States citizen for a maximum of \$10,000," the letter states, "was the greatest thing the government could possibly do for the protection of those dependent upon these men for support."

Take only bamboo. Dutch engineers have built a bridge in Java more than 100 feet long and with a central span of more than 40 feet.

To permit soft coal to be used in hard coal pits, the bureau is the purpose of a new attachment.

## WESTERN LEAGUE

TEAM	W	L	T	PCT	AB	R	H	R	E	BB	SO	BA
Wichita	65	22	1	.748	1088	128	312	101	23	101	23	.312
Sioux City	65	22	1	.748	1088	128	312	101	23	101	23	.312
Des Moines	65	22	1	.748	1088	128	312	101	23	101	23	.312
St. Joseph	65	22	1	.748	1088	128	312	101	23	101	23	.312
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Howman, Wichita.....	13	7	278	87	78	35	43	41	3	1
Applegate, Okla. City.....	20	10	4	714	123	115	69	53	50	13
St. Joseph.....	18	10	4	714	115	71	42	33	34	4
Selkman, Omaha.....	18	10	4	682	127	50	30	18	1	0
Lynch, Wichita.....	19	8	6	643	127	113	59	45	3	3
Rasmussen, Sioux City.....	10	6	625	152	105	54	44	68	0	0
McLaughlin, St. Joseph.....	16	4	600	95	96	28	29	27	2	1
HAYNE, Tulsa.....	19	7	5	583	109	86	37	16	17	2
Burwell, Joplin.....	17	7	583	107	111	71	31	29	3	2
Wichita.....	17	7	534	91	101	52	27	21	2	1